



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS COMMAND
3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-3000

4 October 2012

Commanders and Staff,

As we get ready to celebrate Columbus Day and send our Marines and civilian Marines on extended liberty, I ask that you emphasize the necessity for SAFETY.

Given the upcoming holiday, consider the following:

"The tempest was terrible and separated me from my [other] vessels that night, putting every one of them in desperate straits, with nothing to look forward to but death. Each was certain the others had been destroyed. What man ever born, not excepting Job, who would not have died of despair, when in such weather seeking safety for my son, my brother, shipmates, and myself, we were forbidden the land and the harbors".....Christopher Columbus (1451 - 1506)

It has been 520 years since Christopher Columbus landed in the New World, and this coming Monday marks the anniversary of this event. Think of the planning and preparation that went into the journey. His safety and that of the crews were far from assured, as no one knew in the 15th Century what lie beyond the horizon. The buzz words of risk management for his day may not have been as elegant as today, but they surely addressed the journey's uncertainty, possible mechanical failures, weather, and health of both crew and self. Unlike the 15th Century, we currently have tremendous assets and knowledge readily at our disposal through our numerous safety programs.

I ask you - as leaders of Marines - to look to the example of Columbus, ensuring that your facilities and personnel are proactive on the hazards appropriate for the area and weather conditions. Also, set the example in the coming months by preparing your facilities and people now for tomorrow's winter risks and hazards. There are many things to do - from winterizing vehicles, conducting preseason inspections of heating units, test/replacing smoke detector batteries, etc.....

Please enjoy a safe holiday weekend as you and your staffs embark on your "well-planned" Columbus Day festivities. Make SAFETY your watchword.

Semper Fi,

J. A. KESSLER
Major General, USMC
Commander